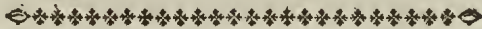


MUREX TRITONIS.



CHARACTER GENERICUS.

Animal Limax.

Testa univalvis, spiralis, exasperata suturis membranaceis.

Apertura desinens in canalem integrum, rectum seu subascendentem.

Lin. Syst. Nat. p. 1213.

CHARACTER SPECIFICUS, &c.

MUREX testa ventricosa oblonga lævi, anfractibus rotundatis, apertura dentata, cauda brevi.

Lin. Syst. Nat. p. 1222.

Buccinum TRITONIS.

Rumph. mus. t. 28. f. B.

Magnificam hanc concham, magnitudine interdum fere sesquipedali, generant præcipue maria Indica. Corniformis cum sit, convertere eam dicuntur pastores Asiatici et Africani in tubam pecuariam; barbaræque nonnullæ gentes in bellicam. Mihi sanc persuasissimum est hanc ipsam testam in animo habuisse Ovidium, qui, simul atque audita sit grandisona Tritonis buccina, maris iram coercitam et immanes diluvii aquas recedentes cecinerit.

Jupiter

Jupiter ut liquidis stagnare paludibus orbem,
Et superesse videt de tot modo millibus unum ;
Et superesse videt de tot modo millibus unam,
Innocuos ambos, cultores numinis ambos ;
Nubila disjecit: nimbisque Aquilone remotis,
Et coelo terras ostendit, et æthera terris.
Nec maris ira manet: positoque tricuspide telo
Mullect aquas rector pelagi: supraque profundum
Extantem, atque humeros innato murice tectum
Cacruleum Tritona vocat; conchæque sonaci
Inspirare jubet; fluctusque et flumina signo
Jam revocare dato. Cava buccina sumitur illi
Tortilis, in latum quæ turbine crescit ab imo:
Buccina, quæ medio concepit ut aëra ponto,
Littora voce replet sub utroque jacentia Phoëbo.
Tum quoque, ut ora Dei madida rorantia barba
Contigit, et cecinit jussos inflata receptus,
Omnibus audita est telluris et æquoris undis:
Et quibus est undis audita, coercuit omnes.
Jam mare littus habet: plenos capit alveus amnes:
Flumina subsidunt: colles exire videntur.
Surgit humus: crescunt loca decrescentibus undis.”

Color illi generalis est albidus seu albo-flavescens, zonis transversis plus minus fuscis, ferrugineis, seu nigricantibus undulatus. Variant enim hujus nec non plerarumque concharum colores ob ætatem, et aliis multis de causis.



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THE
TRITONIAN MUREX.



GENERIC CHARACTER.

Animal allied to a Slug.

Shell univalve, spiral, roughened with membranaceous sutures.

Aperture ending in a strait or subascending channel.

SPECIFIC CHARACTER, &c.

MUREX with large, oblong, smooth, whitish shell, with transverse ferruginous undulations, toothed aperture, and short top.

The Sea Trumpet, or great clouded MUREX.

Triton's Trumpet.

This superb shell, which is sometimes seen of near a foot and a half in length, is principally found in the Indian seas. From its peculiar form it is well adapted for the purpose of a horn or trumpet, and is said to be often used as such by the African and Asiatic shepherds. It is said to be occasionally used as a military trumpet among barbarous nations. We may also conclude it to have been the shell intended by

by Ovid in his description of the retiring of the waters of the deluge on the sound of the trumpet of Triton.

But when th' all-powerful ruler of the sky
Saw earth in one wide waste of waters lie,
While late of all its peopled realms contain'd
One only pair of human race remain'd,
Innocuous both, resign'd to Heav'n's decree,
Celestial pity touch'd the Deity.
At his command, by winds resistless driv'n,
Dispersing clouds to earth unveil the heav'n:
And Neptune bids blue Triton sound amain
His powerful trump, and bind the waves again.
The sea-born herald at the call appears;
High o'er the surge his scaly shoulders rears;
And while the foaming billows round him swell
Grasps with his bearded lip the spiral shell.
With such a blast the sounding conch he blew
O'er all the globe at once the thrilling signal flew.
Back to their ancient bounds, from pole to pole
Th' alarmed seas in refluent circles roll:
The hills emerge; the woods their branches shew;
And earth restor'd peeps slowly from below.

This shell is generally of a whitish or yellowish colour, richly variegated with deep and pale ferruginous, brown, and blackish, transverse undulations; varying, like all other shells in the intensity and beauty of its colours, according to age or other circumstances.